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25 YEAR RE-REVIEW

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19 September 1967

DCI BRIEFING FOR
MAHON SUBCOMMITTEE

POST-ELECTION SITUATION IN SOUTH VIETNAM

- I. The South Vietnamese election came off successfully, but it has ushered in a period of at least temporary uncertainty. The most serious problem at the moment is the rivalry between Thieu and Ky.
 - A. Thieu feels that, as president, he must exercise his full constitutional powers. He says he is willing, however, to respect the views of Vice President Ky and the senior military officers.
 - B. Ky argues that in return for accepting second place to Thieu on the ticket, he was promised a strong voice in the new government, including the right to name the prime minister.
 1. He claims that Thieu is now trying to squeeze him out of the picture, and even rigged the Senate elections to

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eliminate Ky's supporters.

C. This feuding could lead to an eventual complete break between the two top government leaders, or require continued collective military rule behind the scenes to keep the peace.

II. The rivalry between Thieu and Ky could create problems in the provisional national assembly, which must validate the election results and has in the past tended to be responsive to Marshal Ky.

A. We believe that the assembly will eventually certify the election outcome, but the deputies may raise enough fuss to cast some discredit on the voting.

B. The new senate, although generally conservative and somewhat narrowly based, also seems likely to be able to work with Thieu's government.

III. Some defeated civilian presidential candidates or their supporters are interested in cabinet positions and seem inclined to cooperate with the new government; this should help to broaden its base.

- A. At present, runner-up presidential candidate Truong Dinh Dzu, the so-called "peace candidate," is bidding loudly for the leadership of the opposition. His questionable financial past, however, may limit the amount of support he can attract over the long term.
- B. The militant Buddhists are unhappy with the election outcome, but seem unwilling to risk further loss of influence by joining forces with Dzu.
1. Instead, the militant Buddhists, following familiar tactics, appear to have launched a cautious campaign centering on religious issues, in the hope of gradually winning a cause and enough support to challenge the government.

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BACKGROUND NOTES: BOMBING OF NORTH VIETNAM

I. Our air strikes in the Hanoi area in August damaged two important bridges which link the capital both with China and with Haiphong.

A. Two spans of the Doumer Bridge were dropped.

1. Restoration for rail traffic will take an estimated six weeks.

2.

the Vietnamese installing temporary spans for limited truck crossings.

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B. The Canal Des Rapides bridge was still unserviceable

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trucks were cross-

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ing this bridge in limited numbers, but that rail service has not been restored.

II. U.S. bombing efforts in September have been concentrated on North Vietnamese port

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facilities, in an attempt to interdict transport to the interior.

A. At Haiphong, an effort was made to isolate the city by knocking out a complex of five bridges surrounding the western borders of the town.

1. Four of the five bridges have been struck at least once, and two of the four have been rendered un-serviceable.
2. A railroad yard one mile west of Haiphong was bombed on September 11. The yard was extensively cratered, but is probably still serviceable.

B. Hong Gay, the country's second most important port, accounting for 18 percent of national port capacity, is on the target list, but so far weather has prevented strikes.

C. Port facilities at Cam Pha, the third ranking port, were struck on September 10, with some damage. The port will probably be hit again.

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Soviet Military Re-Supply

VI. We estimate that the Soviet Union so far has probably replaced about one third of the total Arab military hardware losses during the fighting in June.

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A. The Arabs were obviously disappointed with the support they got from the Soviet Union during the crisis. The major Soviet airlift in three weeks following the cease-fire was designed to offset this feeling.

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VII. At the same time, the Soviets are increasing the numbers of advisory, training, and technical personnel, particularly in Egypt, where we now estimate there are more than 600.

A. On the one hand, this may be intended to see to it that the Arabs would make better use of Soviet equipment in the future than they did in June.

B. On the other hand, it increases Soviet influence in Arab countries, and helps to cut down the risk of new provocative moves against Israel.

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Briefly, I want to note some of the other developments we should keep an eye on in the Middle East.

Egypt:

VIII. First, in regard to Nasir's domestic situation, there is continuing evidence of political turmoil in Cairo.

A. Nasir still appears to be the dominant figure, despite reported maneuverings among his subordinates, and the antagonism of military figures who have been

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given the entire blame for the debacle.

- B. In the wake of the coup plot led by former First Vice President Abdul Hakim Amir, and Amir's suicide--if it was suicide, there is going to be even stronger disaffection among the military leaders.
- C. The Egyptian public is grumbling over short food supplies, higher prices, and growing unemployment as imports and development projects are cut back. The present belt-tightening in Egypt goes beyond anything recommended by the International Monetary Fund.
1. Nasir's popularity is still high,

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South Arabia:

- X. The present Middle Eastern situation practically guarantees chaos for South Arabia, the Federation which is supposed to replace the British presence in Aden. Nasir and Faysal are too busy to take a firm hand, and the British want out as soon as possible.
- A. When the proposed Federation government fell apart, the British initially hoped that the tribal-based South Arabian army, as the only group capable of imposing order, could be persuaded to take over. The army, however, rejected the offer.
- B. The British then announced their willingness to open negotiations with rival nationalist groups, long engaged in a terrorist campaign against the British and each other: the anti-Egyptian National Liberation Front (NLF), and the Cairo-backed Front for the Liberation of Occupied South Yemen (FLOSY).
1. Neither group has as yet responded to the British offer. They are busy battling--with strikes and terrorism--for

control of the various states in the
Federation.

2. Ultimately the Army will probably have
to step in as the deciding factor between
the two organizations.

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SIKKIM

- I. The recent fighting in Sikkim in the Himalayas resulted from a disagreement between Chinese and Indians about who owned a few square yards of territory.

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- II. Fighting appears to have stopped, but there are always incidents all along the border, any of which could flare up at any time.
- III. The Indians outnumber the Chinese along the border.
- A. The Indians have 26,000 men in Sikkim; the Chinese probably don't have more than 2,000 in the comparable area on their side of the border.
- B. On or near the Sino-Indian border, there are

over 200,000 Indian troops; the Chinese probably have about 80,000.

C. The Chinese have no combat aircraft in the area--although they could move planes in quickly. The Indians have about 500 combat planes at normal duty bases--almost all their air force--within striking distance of the border.

D. The Indians have almost three times as many troops in the area as they did before the 1962 war with China; the Chinese have about half as many as they did in 1962.

IV. The rugged terrain and poorly developed transportation routes in the border area make it difficult for either side to mount any major offensives.

A. In China, the nearest railroad ends about a thousand miles from the border, and the few roads are often cut by landslides and floods.

B. The Indians are much closer to railroads in most areas, but would still have to move supplies through extremely difficult terrain.

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COMMUNIST CHINA

- I. The situation in China is extremely fluid, and has never been more precarious since 1949.
 - A. Steadily worsening disorders this summer have brought China to the most serious crisis since the Communists seized control of the mainland.
- II. There have been reports of violent conflict from every province.
 - A. Groups of fanatic Red Guard extremists are fighting one another.
 - 1. Savage and bloody clashes are reported between Red Guards and organized workers, in some cases incited by local authorities to resist Mao's Cultural Revolution.

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- B. For the first time in the Cultural Revolution, regular military weapons are being

used on a wide scale.

1. Previously only fists, stones, and sharpened poles were used in most clashes.
2. Now, however, rifles and machine guns and even tanks and artillery are being used.
3. Many civilian groups have been armed on the authority of Peking itself. Others have managed to acquire weapons by raiding government arsenals, which seem to be lightly guarded these days.

C. During the past two weeks, local authorities have been trying to recover these weapons, but with only limited success.

1. Most Red Guard factions are unwilling to render themselves defenseless by surrendering arms. Some have been turning in pistols while retaining machine guns.

III. Peking's control over the situation appears to be weakening steadily.

A. The central committee has repeatedly ordered the army to intervene to stop the fighting.

1. These directives have not been vigorously enforced, however. In general, the army seems to be reluctant to get involved,

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B. Maoist leaders in Peking may be getting more confused and desperate. Their latest directive, publicized last week, urged workers to "make revolution" only after working hours. It promised stern punishment for those who fight on government time.

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IV. Whatever the various roots of China's domestic turmoil, its effects are becoming daily more evident and now the economy is beginning to feel the pressure.

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A. Trains run haphazardly.

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B. Key industrial centers have suffered sporadic shut-downs,

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V. In short, the outlook for Maoist leaders and Maoist ideas has never been bleaker.

- A. There is little question that if Mao and company do not call off for moderate their Revolution--which they would be most reluctant to do--the result will be greater chaos, and perhaps a state of complete anarchy.
- B. Beyond this, it is impossible to predict the outcome of the crisis with any confidence.
- C. One possibility is that the situation might be resolved by fragmentation of China into a number of "independent ~~king-~~
~~doms~~." *regions under warlords.*
1. This would leave China far from stability, even after new political organizations were set up. In all likelihood, it would mean a repetition of China's history during the 1920s, when warlords contended for power and the people suffered.
- D. A somewhat more likely outcome is the creation of a truly organized opposition to Mao, which will force him to moderate the present disastrous policies.
- E. The formation of such an opposition would

be a desperate business, requiring a nearly unanimous decision by a large body of powerful and ambitious men if civil war is to be avoided.

1. Given the situation in China today, even a rough prediction of timing is impossible.
2. It seems likely, however, that new and more serious domestic problems could drive the military and the moderates to act.
3. The upcoming fall harvest, and the crucial distribution time immediately following, might be a time when such problems could develop.

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HONG KONG

- I. There is a relative lull at present in the disorders which have been shaking the British Crown Colony of Hong Kong.
 - A. The Chinese Communists, who have had very few successes in foreign policy over the past couple of years, are trying to humble the British in Hong Kong the way they forced the Portuguese to kow-tow in nearby Macao.
 - B. The British are convinced that the best way to retain their existing rights is to take a strong stand against the disorders and against any humiliating Chinese demands.
- II. The confrontation grew out of local labor problems, indicating that the timing was not chosen by Peking, and Communist China has been letting the local Communist leaders in Hong Kong set the pace most of the time.
 - A. Firm police action is keeping violence to a manageable level. There are still sporadic bombings and occasional mob outbreaks, but incipient mass demonstrations have been broken up quickly.

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- B. Public services are functioning, and shipping in Hong Kong harbor has not been seriously delayed.
 - C. Food supplies from neighboring Kwantung Province have been disrupted by the Cultural Revolution turmoil, but there are no serious shortages so far.
- III. For the moment, the Communist leaders in Hong Kong are apparently trying to restrain their more militant followers.
- A. They want to improve the Communist image among Chinese of all inclinations in the colony, in hopes of a successful celebration of Chinese Communist National Day on October first.
 - 1. They may well try to avoid violence and major provocations until after that date.
 - B. Peking's propaganda commentary on the Hong Kong issue has dropped off, and Chinese Army units along the Hong Kong border are exercising better control over militant civilian gangs.
 - C. We expect, however, that the Chinese Communists will continue their long-term effort to undermine British authority in the colony whenever the occasion and the circumstances suit them.